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THE WINTER CURE AT TRUDEAU

By LEONARD T. DAVIDSON

Saranac Lake, New York

There is in the mind of everyone, I believe, an innate dislike of so-called "institutional life." To those, even, who have never been inside an institution, and who know it only through the descriptions of others, the word "sanatorium" brings up unpleasant mental pictures, and the possibility of having to live in such a place for any number of weeks or months looms up very black and discouraging. Such were my own ideas and thoughts, at any rate, when sent off to the Adirondacks for the winter, there to enter a sanatorium for the treatment of tuberculosis, and in such a despondent, even hopeless, frame of mind, I came to Trudeau. So different, however, from my expectation, was it all, so free from the usual atmosphere of an institution, so hopeful, so cheery, so friendly and personal the relations of doctors, nurses, patients, that I found myself liking it from the very first, and was at once more happy and contented than I had thought possible. It is with the hope that others, facing the same prospect, may come with lighter and more optimistic hearts, to institutions in general, and to this one in particular, that this sketch of Trudeau Sanatorium is written.

The Sanatorium, founded by the late Dr. Trudeau, is about a mile and a half outside the village of Saranac Lake, New York. Terraced out of the side of the mountain, the buildings and cottages are grouped in a most artistic and picturesque manner, the whole giving one the impression of a small mountain hamlet, where people are living happy lives, rather than of a sanatorium. And a hamlet in reality it is, with its own post office, its general store, where anything may be bought from blankets to sweetmeats, its library, its small theatre, and its pretty cottages, lining miniature streets. Typical of the Adirondacks is its lovely setting of mountains, forest and lakes, and never more beautiful than in the depth of winter. It is of this wonderful winter time in the mountains that I want especially to tell.

I came to Trudeau in October, just as the last leaves were falling, and I looked forward to the long winter with a good deal of dread. I had never been in a region where there was so much snow and the cold so extreme, but I came to find that these made the winter most enjoyable. I was sent to the Infirmary, and to bed, almost immediately



ONE WING OF THE SNOW-BOUND INFIRMARY



ON THE INFIRMARY PORCH



VIEW FROM THE INFIRMARY—MT. BAKER IN THE DISTANCE



THE LITTLE CHAPEL



A BIT OF TRUDEAU ON A BRILLIANT MORNING



NO DAY IS TOO COLD TO ENJOY "THE CURE"

on my arrival, and it was on that porch with its magnificent outlook over the valley and the mountains beyond, that I lay day after day and watched the winter come. Most patients at the Sanatorium do not have to go to bed for so long a period, but one can consider himself among the fortunate few, who can have the experience I had.

At the Infirmary all is most pleasant. All of the rooms open directly onto the long veranda which extends the entire length of the building, and here patients spend practically all of their time, going inside only for meals. Immediately after breakfast our beds were rolled out, and it was remarkable that almost without exception, we, unconsciously, lay perfectly quiet for a half hour or so, drinking in the beauty and loveliness of each new day and of the ever-changing picture of mountain, river and sky. Reading, writing, knitting,—the last even for the men too—and above all, the jolly talk with others along the porch, made the morning hours fly. After dinner, there was quiet hour from 2 until 4, when everyone slept or rested, absolutely, and then until supper, more of the morning's diversions. Not exciting days, but mightily pleasant ones! The evenings were spent inside until 9 o'clock, when all were again rolled out for the night.

The days grew colder; the first snow came; mittens, sweaters, caps and "pigs" appeared; but still we lay out all day and slept out at night. With the growing cold, there was less and less of reading and more of chatting, or of simply gazing idly at the storm and the mountains. I, for one, never ceased to enjoy that occupation.

The winter birds in the mountains are numerous and very friendly, especially the nuthatches, the little chickadees and the bold, saucy jays. We used to lie for hours watching them feeding on bread and suet hung on the trees by our porch. They became quite tame, even perching on our beds and hopping over the blankets.

As a general rule, on coming to the Sanatorium, one goes into the Medical Building for a period of a week. There all the diagnostic tests are made, and the patient is under close observation by doctor and nurse. He takes no exercise except to go to meals in the next building, and spends practically all his time in the "cure chair," as the long reclining chair is called. At the end of this time, he is moved to a cottage.

In the cottages, men and women are housed separately, four or five in each cottage, and life there is about as nearly normal as it can be anywhere away from one's own home. The cottages are substantial and comfortable, scattered about the grounds, but grouped around the Main Building where all patients go for their meals in one large dining room. Each cottage has a living room, whose center, fittingly,

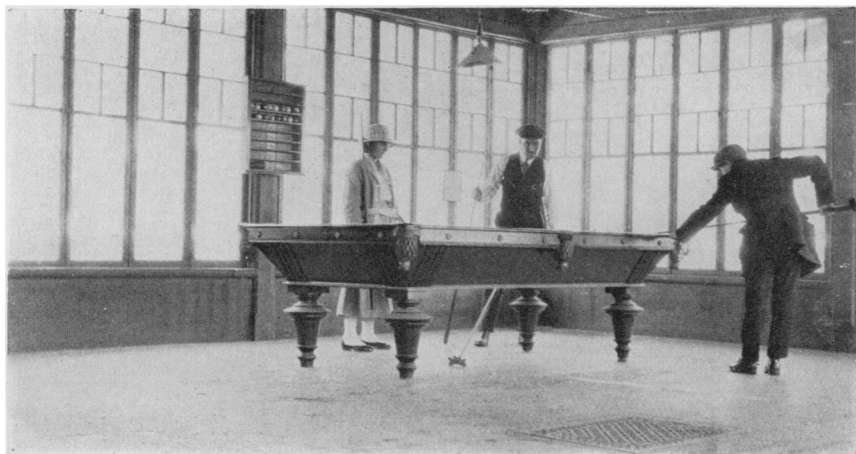
is a cheery fireplace. Off this room are separate rooms for each patient, also the bath room. The porches, so important a part of the cottage, for here most of the time is spent, are spacious and sunny, with ample room for the cure chair, and at night, the bed. Each patient's room opens directly onto the porch and the bed may be rolled in and out at will.

The cottage life is the distinctive characteristic of Trudeau and that which, above all, makes life here so livable. The small, intimate cottage groups are conducive to congeniality, friendship and good times, on the one hand, and to that privacy which every one of us requires at times. On the porch with me, were a teacher and a young fellow just out of college, both of them very interesting and enjoyable, both good story tellers, and we spent many pleasant hours there together "on the cure."

The daily round in the cottage is much the same as in the Infirmary, except that there is more freedom and activity. The time from 9 to 11 in the morning is always spent outside in the chair. Nothing could be more wonderful than those brilliant winter mornings, crisp, cold and clear, with the thermometer way below the zero mark. December, January and February in the Adirondacks are consistently cold, and one must put on plenty of clothing if he is to sit outside with comfort. A fur coat is almost a necessity, and the Sanatorium has a large number of these which it rents to patients for the winter at a very low rate. Thus equipped, there are few days too cold, even at 20 to 30° below zero, to be enjoyable outside.

At 11 a.m., all who are allowed to do so, exercise—take a walk, or go to the workshop for their allotted time. As the great factor in the treatment of tuberculosis is rest, exercise is very carefully regulated. The patient is first allowed only five to fifteen minutes twice daily, this being gradually increased to an hour or more, as his case improves. This exercise consists mainly of walking, and walking here is no ordinary pastime. It is most unusual to find so many different and beautiful walks within so short a radius of one place, as there are here. The wonderful, silent, winter woods are all about, with paths where the snow is deep but passable. There are, too, the open roads, mountain and hill roads, in three directions. One, especially, I loved. It led up through the woods to a clear, wind-swept hill, from which on a bright day the whole wide circle of mountains was visible.

After the walk there is a rest before dinner; and in the afternoon, the quiet hour from 2 until 4. Tea at your own or a friend's cottage and another walk in the winter's early twilight, fill up the time until supper. The evening usually finds the cottagers around the fire in



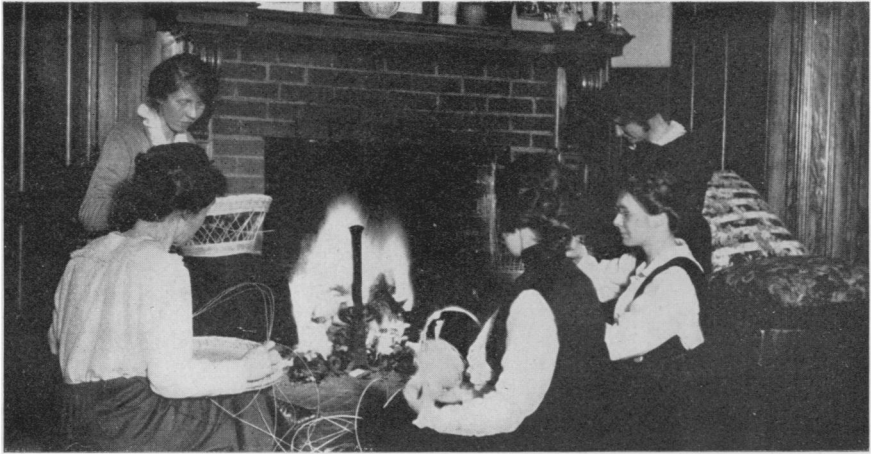
A GAME OF POOL IN THE PAVILION



THE WORKSHOP



CHANGING THE MONOTONY OF "THE CURE"



AROUND A COTTAGE FIREPLACE



A BEAUTIFUL WINTER WALK



ARMED FOR THE MIDNIGHT ATTACK OF JACK FROST

the living room. Reading, letters, music and good companionship fill the short interval till 10 o'clock, when lights must be out, and all in bed, outside, in the cold, crisp, health-giving air. Truly a simple but an altogether sane kind of living! One is here taught, indeed, how to live and enjoy the sane, sensible life, taking on the great fundamental things which in the end satisfy and mean most, and dropping off the trivial affairs which only eat up energy and nerve, and give no lasting good.

And what do we do for amusement these cold winter days with so much snow about? I have mentioned the walks, but more universally enjoyable is the sleighing. This is a sport open to all, for the saying goes, that an hour of riding is worth two of curing, and every winter day, no matter how cold, finds many parties out along the mountain and forest roads. Those who are better and stronger are allowed to snow-shoe, and nothing is more fascinating than this, striking off out of the beaten paths, over the great unbroken expanses of snow. There is, too, on the grounds, a large pavilion, glass enclosed, where there are pool and billiard tables and, at one end, a small, but adequately out-fitted, stage. There entertainments and amateur theatricals are produced at intervals by the patients.

The Main Building, in addition to the common dining room, has a large, homelike, very livable parlor, where, in the evenings, there is music and singing, cards and a general social time. The Thursday Evening Club plans and executes parties and teas and brings to the Sanatorium, at intervals, lecturers, readers and other interesting men and women.

There is, on the grounds, a very beautiful, little chapel, where services are held on Sunday mornings and afternoons, thus affording an opportunity for worship to those patients who are unable to go to the village churches. The little chapel is close by the Infirmary, and well do I remember the peace and quiet of those winter afternoons as we lay and listened to the organ and the singing, from the porch there. It was almost equal to being at service ourselves.

There is another very important part of the institution which I must not fail to describe. This is the workshop. The name is misleading, for it is in reality a playshop and is truly filling a large place in the life of the patients here. Nothing is compulsory but it is open to all, free, the workers paying only for the actual material used. A patient may exchange his exercise time for work in the shop and may double that time. Thus, one having 45 minutes for exercise may work for $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours at the shop. All sorts of interesting things are to be done and competent instructors are at hand to teach the novice, so

that none need be afraid to begin. Basketry is, perhaps, the most popular kind of work, possibly because it is most easily learned and because it offers so much opportunity for the exercise of individual thought and idea. But the other arts all have their devotees—clay modelling, book binding, picture framing, kodak developing and printing, art illumination, leather work, even carpentering, for those who are able to do such work. It is surprising how eager and interested everyone becomes in all these accomplishments, from their very first attempts, what skill and ability they acquire, and what a wide variety of interesting, useful and beautiful things they make. Surely the workshop serves a purpose, in giving to the patients here a useful outlet for the increasing energy and will to do, which accompany a return to health.

Such, in brief, is the life in Trudeau Sanatorium in winter, full and varied in its interests and pleasures, a place where men and women may come to regain health and strength, energy and poise, amid the restfulness and peace of this wonderful mountain region. And let no one come with a heavy heart, but rather in anticipation of a really great experience, for it is a great experience to spend a winter in Trudeau.

THE NATIONAL WHITE CROSS LEAGUE

In the May Bulletin of the National Association for the Study and Prevention of Tuberculosis is a detailed account of the National White Cross League, what it is, and what it does. The League, through solicitors, who usually go from house to house, sells soap, toilet articles, extracts, etc., the profits from which sales are supposed to go for the care of consumptives. As the article shows, the percentage that is actually used for the treatment of tuberculosis is so small that any one who really wishes to help the campaign against this disease would hardly be justified in using the White Cross League as its agency. A copy of the Bulletin will be sent on request to the National Association for the Study and Prevention of Tuberculosis, 105 East 22nd Street, New York City.